REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 5-10 remain in the application, and claims 11-18 are added. Claims 7 and 9, previously indicated as containing allowable subject matter, are amended to be put into independent form, including all the limitations of the claims from which they depended. Claim 7 is also amended to clarify that the one cutting member is one of the rotary cutting members. Claims 5 and 10, dependent from claim 9, will therefore also be allowable.

Applicants note that U. S. Patent 3,992,775 (De Vries) does not appear to be listed on any PTO 1449, and applicants' attorney was not provided with a copy. Accordingly the attorney is unable to provide column and line citations because the text downloaded from the USPTO website is differently formatted.

In view of the comments on the Continuation Sheet of Paper No. 10, the specification is amended to state expressly the structure and function of the outer cutting member, according to what is clear from the specification and the drawing; and to state that the auxiliary part by itself does not have other functions such as skin stretching or lubrication.. This provides antecedence for the language of the added and amended claims.

Art rejection - US 3,992,775 (hereinafter "De Vries")

To the extent that the rejection over De Vries might be maintained against claims 1 and 8, reconsideration is requested because nothing in De Vries teaches nor suggests an auxiliary part snapped onto an outer cutting member, or such a member for removably fastening an attachment.

The claimed invention is an auxiliary part for mounting attachments to a shaver outer cutting member such as the member 4 of the rotary shaver shown in Fig. 1, or the members 53 of reciprocating foil shaver 51 shown in Fig. 6. In this context "attachments" are devices such as a skin stretcher member 9 which includes a lubricant disc 14, or lubricant carrier 59 and skin stretcher members 60 of Figs. 6-8. Replacement of the attachment (lubricant disc) is made easy by removing (pulling) the annular element 8 (which is the portion of part 7 that engages the outer cutting member) off the cutting member 4, or the rectangular member 57 off the cutting members 53.

Applicants respectfully traverse the allegation in Paper No. 8 that De Vries discloses an element "which can be snapped onto an outer cutting member ... and is provided at its other side with means for removably fastening at least one attachment." There is no suggestion in De Vries that element 22 could be permitted to contact an outer cutting member (cutter guard 2), or that the rim 18 can be removed from the strip 22 without damage to the strip, nor is there any reason a user would want to remove it. No one of ordinary skill would call the skin stretcher rim 18 of De Vries an "attachment." It is an integral part of the rotary shaver.

More particularly, De Vries teaches that a rotary shaver has skin tightening means or rim 18 which can be moved up and down relative to the rigid metal shear plate frame 11, by adjusting member 22 which is movable transversely to the direction of height adjustment. Deformable parts 34 of the ring 22 bend and then spring back to their original shape during mounting of the skin-tightening means onto the shear plate frame.

One of ordinary skill would describe the De Vries shear plates or cutter guards 2, having shaving slits 3, as the outer cutting members of a triple head shaver. These cutter guards are mounted in the openings of metal shear plate frame 11 which is connected to the housing by hook-shaped cams 12. This construction permits user removal of the frame 11 with cutter guards and rim 18 as a unit, without use of tools, and allows limited movement of the cutter guards relative to the frame.

The skin tightening means or rim 18 is a triangular member which surrounds the shear plate frame and is aligned in the angular direction by a rib 21 which engages a recess 20 of the frame 11. Adjusting member 22 is a continuous flexible strip which moves around the triangular periphery of the frame 11 in response to user movement of a projecting part 23. Inwardly projecting cams 29 on the strip engage sloping slotted recesses 25 in the walls of the frame 11, so that as the strip 22 is moved around the periphery it also moves in a longitudinal direction parallel to the axis of the cutter guards 11. The skin tightening means 18 has internal guide slots 30 which cooperate with bendable parts 34 of the flexible strip (ring) 22 so that the means 18 moves longitudinally with the strip 22.

Assembly of the parts 18 and 22 is described in the penultimate paragraph, which starts with "Mounting of". The flexible ring or strip 22 is slid longitudinally onto the frame 11 until the deformability of the strip allows cams 29 to engage the recesses 25 in the frame. Then a spring 35

and plate 36 are fitted onto the knob 23 of the strip. Then the means (rim) 18 is attached by moving it in a tilted position so that the knob 23 passes through the slot 24, and then the rim lower edge engages the deformable parts 34 of the strip 22 and causes them to bend inwards. When the rim 18 is fully positioned the deformable parts 34 spring back to their original shape, locking the rim longitudinally onto the strip 22.

Further, no one of ordinary skill would say that the strip 22 is "snapped onto the corresponding outer cutting member." Rather the strip 22 is a loose fit, "appreciably thinner than the clearance between the inside of the skin tightening means 18 and the outside of the shear plate frame 11 (paragraph starting with "The adjusting ring 22"), except for the ribs 28 whose thickness corresponds to the clearance, and is placed around the rigid frame 11. The outer cutting members (cutter guards 2) are separate and distinct from this frame, and have limited longitudinally movement in this frame (paragraph starting with "The cutter guards 2").

Accordingly claims 1 and 8 are patentable over De Vries.

Art rejection - US 4,003,390 (hereinafter "Solie")

To the extent that the rejection over Solie might be maintained against claims 1 and 2, reconsideration is requested because nothing in Solie suggests an auxiliary part for mounting attachments, or one which snaps onto an outer cutting member. Rather Solie teaches attachments, usable of themselves, which snap onto a cutter frame and which also include means for removably fastening a further attachment.

The term "auxiliary part" as used herein clearly means a part which is auxiliary to the electric shaver, and which is not of itself a useful attachment.

Solie teaches a plurality of guide elements arranged respectively for use with a two head rotary shaver or a rectangular reciprocating shaver. In each case the guide element mounts on a frame or mounting surface which is separate from the outer cutting member. This is shown clearly in Fig. 3, where rotary blade mechanism 13 is spaced some distance from the end surface of the housing 12 and the circumferential surface of the unnumbered part below the blade mechanism 13.

The rotary head shaver 11 has an oval head perimeter whose shape matches the shape of the guide elements 17 and 18, which may be identical. Each guide element has clips for engaging the head of the razor or another guide element, so that for cutting hair to a shorter length only one

guide element is clipped onto the razor (Fig. 3), while for cutting hair longer one guide element is clipped onto the razor and a second guide element is clipped onto the first (Fig. 1), or as shown in Fig. 2 the two guide element are clipped together before mounting. Fig. 1A shows a variation of guide element which is tapered in depth in the long direction, while Fig. 1B shows a guide element which is tapered in depth in the shorter direction.

Fig. 4 shows a rectangular guide element 71 mounted on the rectangular head 72 of a reciprocating cutter electric shaver. The side walls 73, 74 of the guide element clip onto or snap into depressions or grooves 77 "normally present along the sides of the razor head." Examining Fig. 4 closely, one of ordinary skill will recognize that 6 outer cutting members are shown, three to each side of a central skin guide, and that the depressions 77 are not present in the outer cutting member but rather in a non-slitted skin guide surrounding the cutter structures. This surrounding skin guide corresponds to the skin tightening rim of De Vries.

Like the Figs. 1 and 2 embodiment, two rectangular guide elements can be stacked on each other, using depressions 78, but no one of ordinary skill would call either one "an auxiliary part ... for removably fastening an attachment."

Accordingly, because Solie does not teach nor suggest an auxiliary part, or such a part snapped onto an outer cutting member, claims 1 and 2 are patentable over Solie.

Art rejection - US 5,283,953 (hereinafter "Ikuta")

To the extent that the rejection over Ikuta might be maintained against claims 1 and 8, reconsideration is requested because nothing in Ikuta teaches nor at all suggests that an attachment is removably attached to an auxiliary part.

Claim 1, and claim 8 dependent therefrom, require that the auxiliary part element is snapped onto the outer cutting member by one side of the element, and the attachment is removably fastened to the other side of the element.

Ikuta teaches no more than a combination stop and snap connection which position the outer cutting member with respect to the rest of the cutter head 20.

Applicants respectfully traverse the allegation in the penultimate line of page 2 of Paper No. 8 that element 33 "can be snapped onto an outer cutting member by its one side (51) and is provided at its other side with means for removably fastening at least one attachment to the element

(34)." To the contrary, element 33 is permanently connected to the outer cutting member, and there is no suggestion that any attachment is ever removably fastened to the element 33.

More particularly, Ikuta's outer cutting member is the shearing foil 40 which is carried by outer circular head frame 30 (col. 4, lines 25-26), and which is formed by the center foil 41 and annular peripheral foil 51 (col. 4, lines 32-25). Foil 51 is connected to center foil 41 by tabs 46 of metal ring 46 which fit into holes 52 of legs of the foil 51. Outer foil 51 is connected to the head frame 30 via an outer flange 53 of the foil 51 and a retainer ring 33. The retainer ring is "supported to" the head frame 30 by resilient hooks 34 which engage recesses in the interior of the head frame 30 in such a way that the ring and outer foil can move vertically relative to the head frame 30 (col. 4, lines 44-67).

Therefore foils 41 and 51 together correspond to the outer cutting member. If element 33 can be removed, it takes with it the radially outer portion 51 of the outer cutting member.

Thus it is clear that element 33 is an integral part of the cutter head 20 which holds portions of the cutter head together, and is not an auxiliary part which can be snapped onto the outer cutting member.

Accordingly the claims are patentable over Ikuta.

Claims 11-18 cover aspects of the invention also not suggested by the cited references, and believed worthy of patent protection.

Accordingly, all the rejected claims are shown to be patentable. Accordingly applicants respectfully request entry of the amendment, and that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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